

obeyed the Emperors all the years of my life,\* said Bishop Philippus of Hraclea, " and, when their commands are just, I hasten to obey. For the Holy Scripture has ordered me to render to God what is due to God and to Caesar what is due to Csesar. I have kept this commandment without flaw down to the present time, and it only remains for me to give preference to the things of heaven over the attractions of this world. Remember what I have already said several times, that I am a Christian and that I refuse to sacrifice to your gods." Nothing could be more dignified or explicit. It is the Emperor-God and his fellow deities of Olympus, not the Emperor, to whom the Christian refuses homage. During a trial at Catania in Sicily the judge, Calvisianus, said to a Christian, " Unhappy man, adore the gods, render homage to Mars, Apollo, and ^Esculapius." The answer came without a second's hesitation : " I adore the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—the Holy Trinity—beyond whom there is no God. Perish the gods who have not made heaven and earth and all that they contain. I am a Christian." From first to last, in Spain as in Africa, in Italy as in Sicily, this is the alpha and the omega of the Christian position, "*Christianus sum.*"<sup>1</sup>

To what extent was the martyrdom self-inflicted ? How far did the Christians pile with their own hands the faggots round the stakes to which they were tied? It is significant that some churches found it necessary to condemn the extraordinary exaltation of spirit which drove men and women to force themselves upon the notice of the authorities and led